

Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-06 ISO-00 AS-01 OPR-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 RSC-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

SP-02 AID-05 PC-01 MC-01 /051 W

----- 041645

R 081200Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8955

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 2508

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, MILI, SU

SUBJ: BLOODSHED AT RABAK

1. LOCAL MEDIA REPORTED NOV. 6 THAT A SERIES OF INCIDENTS TOOK PLACE OCT. 12-29 INVOLVING ARMY GARRISON AND VILLAGERS AT RABAK, IN BLUE NILE PROVINCE NEAR KOSTI, AND RESULTING IN DEATH OF ONE SOLDIER AND FOUR CIVILIANS. (IT IS RUMORED THAT ORIGIN OF INCIDENTS WERE JEALOUSY OF HUSBAND WHOSE WIFE WAS HAVING AFFAIR WITH SOLDIER IN RABAK GARRISON.) SOLDIERS WERE ASSAULTED BY ONE OR MORE VILLAGERS ON THREE SEPARATE OCCASIONS, ON LATEST OF WHICH ONE SOLDIER DIED FROM WOUNDS. SUBSEQUENT RETALIATION BY GARRISON LEFT NUMEROUS HUTS BURNED AND FOUR DEAD AND EIGHT WOUNDED AMONG VILLAGERS. (OTHER REPORTS INDICATE TOLL MIGHT BE CONSIDERABLY HIGHER.) ARMY VICE CHIEF OF STAFF, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF POLICE AND PROVINCIAL COMMISSIONERS ALL MADE PERSONAL VISIT TO VILLAGE. CALM IS SAID TO PREVAIL NOW, AND INCIDENTS ARE UNDER FURTHER INVESTIGATION.

2. COMMENT: WHILE RABAK IS ANSAR STRONGHOLD CLOSE TO ABA ISLAND REDOUT OF ORIGINAL MAHDI, EVIDENCE SUGGESTS
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THAT PERSONAL DISPUTES, RATHER THAN POLITICS, WERE

BEHIND INCIDENTS. SUDANESE ARMY HAS BEEN KNOWN IN PAST FOR ITS CLOSE CONTACT WITH LOCAL POPULACE, AND EMOTIONAL, BLOODY FEUDS ARE ENTIRELY PLAUSIBLE OCCURENCE. ON THE OTHER HAND, DIVISION OF DISPUTANTS ALONG STRICTLY MILITARY/CIVILIAN LINES AND FACT MOST VICTIMS WERE ANSARS IMPLY UNDERLYING TENSION WHICH, IF NOT ISOLATED AND DISSIPATED, COULD GIVE REGIME SERIOUS POLITICAL PROBLEMS OVER LONG HAUL. HIGH-LEVEL ATTENTION GIVEN TO INCIDENTS SUGGEST GOS FULLY AWARE OF DANGER.

3. PUBLICATION OF DETAILS IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF GOS ALLOWING "DIRTY LINEN" TO BE AT LEAST PARTIALLY DISPLAYED SO AS TO FORESTALL RUMORMONGERING POTENTIALLY MORE INJURIOUS THAN THE TRUTH.
BERLIND

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMED FORCES, CIVIL DISORDERS, DEATHS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: Izenbel0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974KHARTO02508
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740322-0431
From: KHARTOUM
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741160/aaaabymo.tel
Line Count: 76
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: Izenbel0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 JUN 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <31 MAR 2003 by Izenbel0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BLOODSHED AT RABAK
TAGS: PINT, MILI, SU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005